

Certain ideologies, if accepted, have consequences. Jews undergo a ritual every year where they pledge themselves to be recklessly dishonest, relinquishing all future oaths. It is entitled Kol Nidre. The Jewish Encyclopedia provides the text of the prayer:

"Before sunset on the eve of the Day of Atonement, when the congregation has gathered in the synagogue, the Ark is opened and two rabbis, or two leading men in the community, take from it two Torah-scrolls. Then they take their places, one on each side of the ḥazzan, and the three recite in concert a formula beginning with the words , which runs as follows:

"In the tribunal of heaven and the tribunal of earth, by the permission of God-blessed be He-and by the permission of this holy congregation, we hold it lawful to pray with the transgressors."

Thereupon the cantor chants the Aramaic prayer beginning with the words "Kol Nidre," with its marvelously plaintive and touching melody, and, gradually increasing in volume from pianissimo to fortissimo, repeats three times the following words:

"All vows [], obligations, oaths, and anathemas, whether called 'ḵonam,' 'ḵonas,' or by any other name, which we may vow, or swear, or pledge, or whereby we may be bound, from this Day of Atonement until the next (whose happy coming we await), we do repent. May they be deemed absolved, forgiven, annulled, and void, and made of no effect; they shall not bind us nor have power over us. The vows shall not be reckoned vows; the obligations shall not be obligatory; nor the oaths be oaths."

The leader and the congregation then say together:(Num. xv. 26).

"And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them, seeing all the people were in ignorance"

This also is repeated three times. The ḥazzan then closes with the benediction, : "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast preserved us and hast brought us to enjoy this season." In many congregations Num. xiv. 19-20 is recited before this benediction. After it the Torah-scrolls are replaced, and the customary evening service begins.":

<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=340&letter=K&search=kol%20Nidre#1023#ixzz1L7yKeRQY>

The Jewish Encyclopedia, like other English Jewish Encyclopedias, purports that the "prayer" applies only to breaking vows to oneself or to God.

Is this true? Keep in mind that Israel Shahak and Norton Mezvinsky, in "Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel" (2d ed. 2004), noted that "in the usual English translations of talmudic literature some of the most sensitive passages are usually toned down or falsified," (p. 1) and that "the great

majority of books on Judaism and Israel, published in English especially, falsify their subject matter," in part by omitting or obscuring such teachings (pp. 150-51).

Nevertheless, the Soncino edition of the Babylonian Talmud provides clarification. I quote from Nedarim, 23a-23b:

"He who desires his friend to eat with him, and after urging him, imposes a vow upon him, it is 'a vow of incitement' [and hence invalid]. And he who desires that none of his vows made during the year shall be valid, let him stand at the beginning of the year and declare, 'Every vow which I may make in the future shall be null. [HIS VOWS ARE THEN INVALID,] PROVIDING THAT HE REMEMBERS THIS AT THE TIME OF THE VOW.'" (I. Epstein, Editor, "Nedarim 23a-23b", The Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nashim, The Soncino Press, London, (1948), pp. 67-68): <http://tinyurl.com/3mfwalj>

It says nothing about "vows between him and god". It says all vows.

The Jewish encyclopedia specifically references Nedarim 23b as forming a basis of Kol Nidre:

"An important alteration in the wording of the "Kol Nidre" was made by Rashi's son-in-law, Meir ben Samuel, who changed the original phrase "from the last Day of Atonement until this one" to "from this Day of Atonement until the next." Thus the dispensation of the "Kol Nidre" was not as formerly a posteriori and concerned with unfulfilled obligations of the past year, but a priori and having reference to vows which one might not be able to fulfil or might forget to observe during the ensuing year. Meir ben Samuel likewise added the words "we do repent of them all" ([H]), since, according to the Law, real repentance is a condition of dispensation. The reasons assigned for this change were that an "ex post facto" annulment of a vow was meaningless, and that, furthermore, no one might grant to himself a dispensation, which might be given only by a board of three laymen or by a competent judge ("mumheh"). Meir ben Samuel cited further, in support of his arguments, Ned. 23b, which reads:

"Whoever wishes all the vows he may make throughout the year to be null and void shall come at the beginning of the year and say: `May all the vows which I shall vow be annulled.'"

Thus we see that the Jewish encyclopedia is giving two meanings - one for the masses, and one for the initiated.

The disillusioned Jewish intellectual Samuel Roth said the following, in "The Jews Must Live", p. 131-136:

"And is that, you ask, all of the Kol Nidre? That is all there is to the Kol Nidre, I must answer. In reciting it the Jew solemnly swears before his Lord God that he has only one fealty, loyalty or obligation, and that is to Him, the Lord God. No matter what business he may undertake to promote with his neighbor, be it material or moral, he wants the Lord God to understand in advance that there will be one implicit condition (a condition, however, he does not undertake to explain before entering into an argument): the execution of it must be favorable to Him, the Lord God, or it will be considered by the Jew void, of no account, utterly useless, as if it had never been mentioned, as if nothing related to it had ever been negotiated.

When the meaning of Kol Nidre became known during the Dark Ages, a cry of rage broke from the throats of the goyim. "In that case," they cried, "a Jew may enter into any arrangement with us, with a light heart. Does his enterprise prosper? Then he abides by the agreement. If not, he can always denounce the whole affair by remembering that in the moment of Kol Nidre, the most sacred of all the moments in the Jew's life, he had practically, fully and without equivocation negated it."And so it came about that the eve of Yom Kippur became, for the gentiles throughout Europe, a time for protest against Jewish knavery. Usually the gentiles living near a Jewish community would announce the coming of Yom Kippur by displaying posters everywhere, reading:"BEWARE: THE DAY IS AT HAND WHEN THE JEW RENOUNCES AS INSINCERE ANY DEALINGS HE MAY HAVE WITH YOU DURING THE COMING YEAR. BEWARE!"In many communities legislators considered it necessary to have a special form of oath administered to Jews - an oath intended to negate the oath of Kol Nidre. This oath was known as the Jew's Oath. There were judges who absolutely refused to take any supplementary oath from a Jew, as totally insincere and untrustworthy, and they based their objections chiefly on Kol Nidre.The origin of this most extraordinary (as well as unwise) of all Jewish prayers is hidden in the mists of the Dark Ages. No one knows how it came into existence in the first place. No one has any idea how it became so vital a part of the synagogue service. It is only fair to add that, in spite of the general acceptance which Kol Nidre has enjoyed since its inception, there has never been a time when there was a really strong and honest opposition to it among Jews. Of the six Gaonim of the two Babylonian Academies, for instance, five placed themselves unalterably against admitting it into the program of prayer for Yom Kippur.

The retention and magnification of Kol Nidre in the grand order of the synagogue is a characteristic bit of Jewish mob obstinacy - in this case an obstinacy entirely without justification in reason or in history ... The accepted

current version has an important alteration made in it by Rashi's son-in-law, Meier ben Samuel, who changed the original phrase "from the last Day of Atonement to this one" to "from this Day of Atonement to the next one." As if, morally, it makes any difference whether you waltz on an arrangement already made or on one you might make at a later date!

But the height of interpretive shrewdness is reached in the explanation of Rabbi Isaiah of Trani. "Since the Jews come to the synagogue on Yom Kippur to ask forgiveness for all their sins, it is important that they clear themselves of all vows which they might carry out during the following year. Kol Nidre has dug a trench for itself deep in the heart of the Jewish people. It seems as if to try to undermine it is to undermine the life of the whole people. . . We must unearth Kol Nidre and fling the foul corpse over the rim of the earth, if we are ever to get rid of Judaism.

I have the same objection to Yom Kippur (Day of Forgiveness) that I have to the Catholic institution of Confession. It breeds instability of mind and character. If a man knows that no matter how badly he behaves a whole year, no matter what crimes or iniquities he commits, a day sure to come when all his transgressions, civil and criminal alike, will be forgiven him, it is only human that he should be tempted to do rash, violent things to promote his worldly fortunes.": <http://tinyurl.com/3enjkgr>, <http://tinyurl.com/3jvevg8>, <http://tinyurl.com/3hufnbn>, <http://tinyurl.com/3dd58yf>

The Jewish intellectual Israel Shahak, a long time associate of Noam Chomsky and Gore Vidal, wrote in his very important book Jewish History, Jewish Religion (which I recommend to everybody reading this thread) that the Kol Nidre ritual is "regarded as the most 'holy' and solemn occasion of the Jewish liturgical year, attended even by very many Jews who are otherwise far from religion"(p. 42): <http://tinyurl.com/3qrxjxf>

The converted Jew Nathaniel Kapner also acknowledged the pernicious nature of the Kol Nidre prayer. When asked about the testimony of whitewashed Jewish sources that Kol Nidre does not apply to contracts between Jews and Gentiles, he said "That's all for Gentile consumption": <http://www.truthtellers.org/alerts/kolnidre.htm>

Another Jewish individual, in an amazon review, spoke of his experiences studying in Yeshiva and how he lost his faith fighting in the Israeli military. He then said: "The holiest holiday for the Jews is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Have you Christian pastors who believe they are the chosen people EVER wondered what this holiday means? Have you ever analyzed the great prayer, the Kol Nidre? It is asking forgiveness of any debts owed to non-Jews, and for any harm done or that will be done to non-Jews. Does the true God advocate such hate?":

http://www.amazon.com/review/R1KH3ADOBZOLK/ref=cm_cr_pr_cmt?ie=UTF8&ASIN=0939482037&nodeID=&tag=&linkCode=#wasThisHelpful

Rabbi Drach, a knowledgeable Jew who converted to Catholicism, stated the following in 1844:

<< Cette cérémonie, appelée הפרת נדרים (annulation des vœux et des promesses), se fait pour chaque juif au moins une fois par an. Communément dans les jours de pénitence, depuis la veille du jour de Tan, vers le mois de septembre, jusqu'à la veille de la fête des Expiations.

Le juif qui sent sa conscience trop chargée de promesses et de serments, fait asseoir trois de ses frères qui se constituent aussitôt en tribunal. Devant cette cour, il expose qu'il

se repent de toutes les promesses et de tous les serments qu'il a jamais articulés, et qu'il les rétracte. « Ils sont si nombreux, dit-il en terminant sa protestation, que je ne saurais les spécifier. Qu'ils soient donc à vos yeux, je vous prie, ô rabbis, comme si je les avais énumérés en détail. »

Le tribunal, sans autre forme de procès, déclare les susdits serments et promesses nuls, de nul effet et non avenus.

Avant que le chantre entonne à la synagogue la première prière de la fête des Expiations, trois hommes, réunis en tribunal et placés en tête de l'assistance, annulent de leur

pleine autorité tous les vœux, les engagements et les serments de chacun de l'assemblée, tant ceux de l'année qui vient de s'écouler, que ceux de l'année où l'on est entré. On appelle cela Col nidrè. Quelques rabbins ont voulu soutenir que cette dernière annulation n'est valable que pour l'avenir.

L'effet, en dernier résultat, serait toujours le même, puisque cette cérémonie se répète tous les ans. Mais ils ont été victorieusement réfutés par d'autres docteurs qui prouvent que l'on en profite aussi bien pour le passé que pour l'avenir.

Nous n'avons pas besoin de faire apprécier le funeste effet de ces deux cérémonies si opposées à tous les principes de la morale la plus simple. Nous ajouterons seulement que,

d'après de graves rabbins, un juif n'est obligé de se faire ainsi relever de ses serments que lorsqu'ils l'engagent envers un coreligionnaire; car, rien ne l'engage envers des non-juifs.>> (DRACH, D.P. De l'Harmonie entre l'Eglise et la Synagogue , Vol. 1, 1844. p. 559):

<http://ia600603.us.archive.org/25/items/DeLharmonieEntrelegliseEtLaSynagogue1844-Vol.III/488921570.pdf>

So according to Rabbi Drach, Jews don't even consider Gentiles worth making promises to!

Alexander McCaul, professor of Old Testament Hebrew and Rabbinic Literature at King's College (1799-1863), provides further clarification on pp. 221-227 of The Old Paths: <http://tinyurl.com/3pefspc>